

**Using the *Stages*
Framework as a Strategy
for Designing Curriculum
and Alternative
Assessment for Learners
with Cognitive and
Language Challenges**

***Ways to Include Learners with
Special Needs in Assessments***

- 1) participate in the general education assessment methods;**
- 2) use accommodations or modifications to the general education assessment methods;**
- 3) participate in performance-based or portfolio alternative assessment.**

Eligibility for Alternative Assessment

A student with a disability who....

- requires substantial modifications to instructional level and learning standards in a content area, and
- requires intensive, individualized instruction in order to acquire and generalize knowledge, and
- is unable to demonstrate knowledge and skills on a paper and pencil test, even with accommodations,

. . should participate in local alternate assessment in that specific subject area.

***IEP Teams can consider other students
for alternative assessment***

A student with a disability may require
alternate assessment if . . .

- The complexity or severity of the disability presents
unique and significant challenges to demonstrating
knowledge and skills on standard tests, or
- the regular test format does not allow student to
demonstrate his or her knowledge and skills,
. . . and these challenges cannot be
overcome using accommodations.

**Another model for how all
students access
the general curriculum**

- Standards as written
- Entry points
- Access skills

Other terminology?

Entry Points

- Based on the general curriculum
(i.e., learning standards)
- Faithful to essence of standard
- Low-med-high levels of difficulty
and complexity
- Appropriately challenging for each
student

Access Skills

When even the lowest Entry Point
seems too challenging...

- Student can practice targeted access
skills within standards-based instruction
- Instruction can still focus on standards

Model Levels of Participation- General Curriculum

Introductory: Skills that require **basic processing** of information
to address real-world situations that are related to the content
standards, regardless of the age or grade level of the student.

Fundamental: Skills that require **simple decision-making** to address
real-world situations that are related to the content standards,
regardless of the age or grade level of the student.

Comprehensive: Skills that require **higher-order thinking** and
complex information-processing skills that are related to the
content standards, regardless of the age or grade level of the
student.

Louisiana State Board of Education; Alternative Assessment Teacher's Guide to Statewide Alternative
Assessment, Spring 2003.

North Carolina Standard Course of Study Language Arts

Competency Goal 1 The learner will develop and apply enabling
strategies and skills to read and write.

Essence: The learner will develop strategies for communication

Presymbolic Skills

- * Activate a switch to start a book on tape
- * Finger scan a textured object that represents the next activity.

Early Symbolic

- * Name community building pictures
- * Point to self when first letter of own name is placed in hand
- * Identify restroom symbol
- * Identify own workbook through tactile scanning

Symbolic

- * Identify weather related words
- * Read sight words embedded in a story

• <http://www.uncc.edu/aap/>

**Example: MA Curriculum Frameworks
Learning Standards and Essence**

Learning Standards

Essence

CONTENT English Language Arts
STRAND Language
General Standard 3: Oral Presentation
Students will make oral presentations that demonstrate appropriate consideration of audience, purpose, and the information to be conveyed.

English Language Arts
Strand 1
Language
General Standard 3
PreK – 2
3 – 4

Grade Level: PreK – 2; 3 – 4

Learning Standards as written		Essence of the Standard(s)
PreK – 2	3.1 Give oral presentations about personal experiences or interests, using clear enunciation and adequate volume. 3.2 Maintain focus on the topic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give oral presentations based on personal interests Stay on topic

How all students can participate

standards as written

entry points

access skills

Addressing Learning Standard(s) as written for this grade level:
 Rosa gives a presentation on the museum visit using American Sign Language, as do her classmates.

Addressing Learning Standard(s) at lower levels of complexity ("Entry Points"):
 Jeffrey shares two or three photographs of favorite exhibits with a smaller group of students.

Addressing Access Skill(s) (skills embedded in academic instruction):
 Amber reaches for, grasps, and activates an electronic switch that advances slides of a museum trip when prompted by a peer.

Primary Evidence

- Student Work
- Instructional Data
- Videotapes
- Photographs (only in special cases)

• *Something to discuss?*

Stage Five: Reading for Meaning - Words			
Learner's Name:	Randy	Prompt Type:	Multisensory
Input Method:	Mouse and Keyboard	Word Set:	Grade 2
	Tries	Correct?	Finish?
read	1	Yes	Yes
sing	2	Yes	
sleep	2	Yes	Time (seconds incurred)
write	1	Yes	1:24
wash	1	Yes	

1/5/02
3:42 PM
Print
Score
Done

Secondary Evidence provides description, clarification or explanation, and context to support Primary Evidence:

- Photographs
- Narratives
- Audiotape
- Reflection sheets
- Letters of support
- Visual aids, organizers, other tools used by student

[illegible]

Scoring Criteria (Rubric): Level of Complexity

Difficulty and Complexity of Material

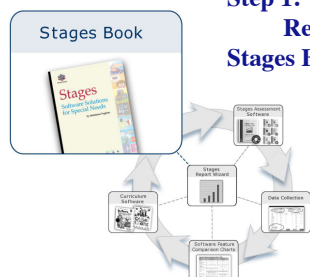
1	2	3	4	5
Not based on standards; OR not indicated	Access skills practiced within standards-based instruction	Modified learning standards (entry points)	Small number of learning standards as written (at or near grade-level)	Broad range of learning standards as written (at or near grade-level)

Stages Framework Process

Diagnostic and Prescriptive



Step 1: Read the Stages Book



Book Components

Overview of Stages

- What is Stages?
- Research (Piaget + Chomsky) = New Theory

About the Learners

- Observable Characteristics
- Competency Goals
- Sample IEP Objectives
- Off computer activity ideas
- Communication ideas

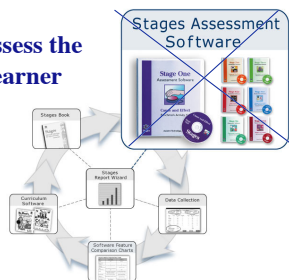
About the Software

- Software Selection Tips
- Recommended Programs



Step 2:

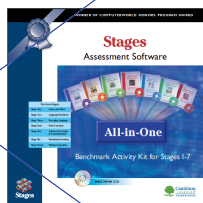
Assess the Learner

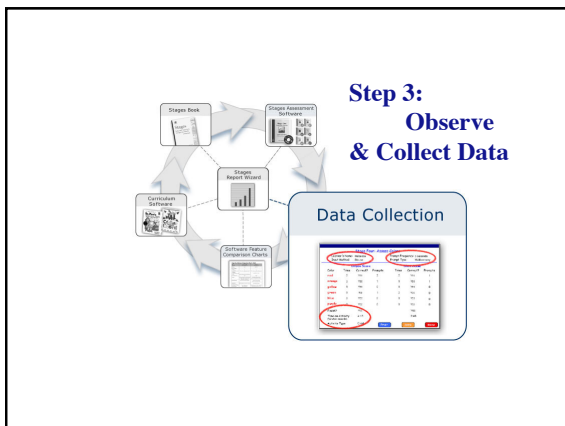


Assessment Kits

Each Kit includes:

- accessible computer activities to assess a learner's skills
- script for evaluator to follow
- unique Observation Form
- a guide to selecting appropriate software





Gather Computer Data

- Maintain student portfolios
- Track student progress
- Share progress with parents
- Alternate assessment is not an event, it is a journey!

Record Observations

- What motivates the learner?
- Distractions in the room?
- Additional assistance needed?

Select Practice Software

Stage Five

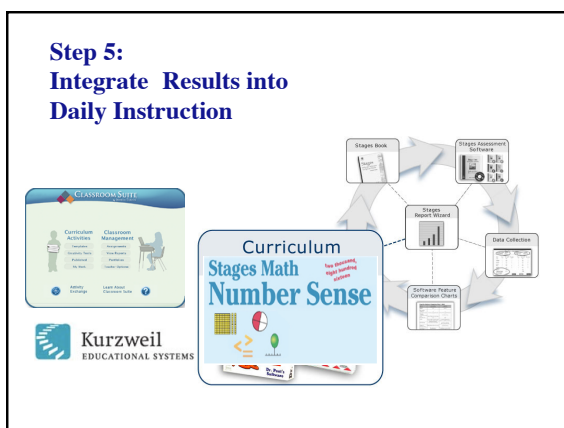
Curriculum Software Search

- [How to use this form](#)
- [Return to Stages Main Search Home](#)
- [Privacy at Terms](#)

Search by Feature

<p>Publisher: (scroll down and select) Show All Publishers (short links) Curriculum Company Creative Communicator Click</p>	<p>Platform: <input checked="" type="radio"/> Any platform <input type="radio"/> Mac <input type="radio"/> Win <input type="radio"/> iOS</p>	<p>Graphics: <input checked="" type="radio"/> No preference <input type="radio"/> Child <input type="radio"/> Teen/Adult <input type="radio"/> Generic</p>
<p>Access Options: <input checked="" type="radio"/> No preference <input type="radio"/> Keyboard <input type="radio"/> Mouse <input type="radio"/> IntelliKeys <input type="radio"/> Touchscreen <input type="radio"/> Switch</p>	<p>Feedback Type: <input checked="" type="radio"/> No preference <input type="radio"/> Auditory Feedback <input type="radio"/> Visual Feedback <input type="radio"/> Multisensory Feedback</p>	
<p>Content: <input checked="" type="radio"/> No preference <input type="radio"/> Language Arts <input type="radio"/> Math <input type="radio"/> Problem Solving <input type="radio"/> Reading <input type="radio"/> Spelling <input type="radio"/> Science <input type="radio"/> Social Studies</p>	<p>Software MUST have Record Keeping? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No</p> <p>Software MUST also be appropriate for another Stage? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No</p>	

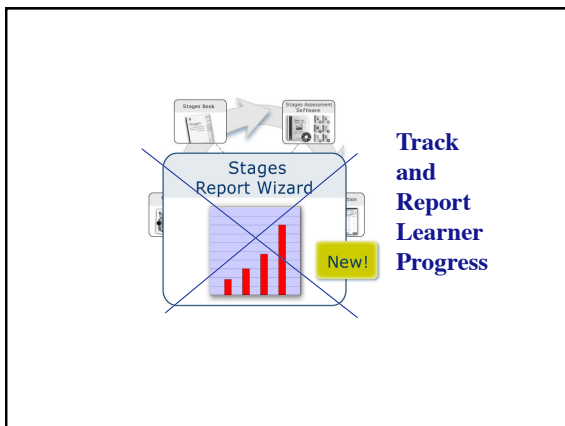
Sort by: [Title](#) [First Software](#) [Start Date](#)

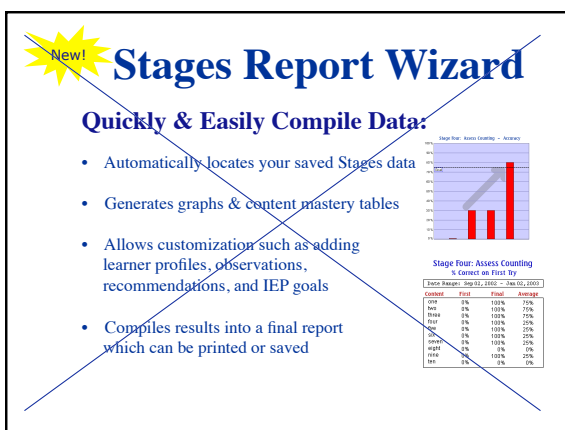


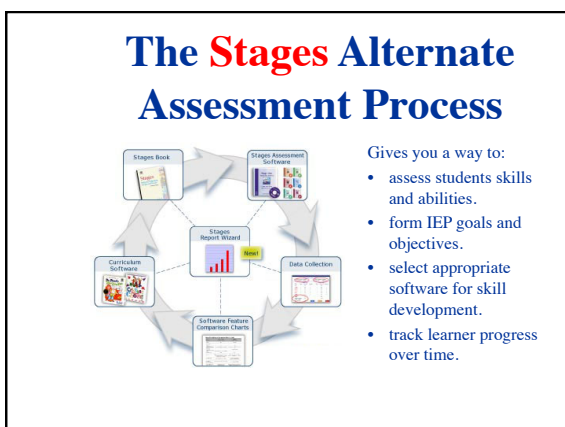
~~Curriculum Bundles~~

Each bundle includes:

- computer programs for building skills ("Practice, Practice, Practice!")
- popular programs in special education and language development
- software developed by therapists and educators in the field







References

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